

24 October 1978

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## Soviet Turnabout On Cruise Missile Linked to Tests

United Press International

Withdrawal of Soviet demands for strategic arms limitation treaty restrictions on cruise missiles was preceded by tests in which Mig25 jet fighters "shot down" drones similar to the U.S. weapons, high-level Pentagon sources said yesterday.

But a Defense Department spokesman, Thomas Ross, said the administration is "confident that the cruise missile we are now building can penetrate existing Soviet air defenses" and will be successful against future defenses as well.

Ross and a spokesman for the Central Intelligence Agency declined to comment on recent intelligence discoveries involving issues that are linked with SALT, but sources at the Pentagon said new developments have come to light.

Among them are installation of the SA10, a new type of antiaircraft missile, regarded as designed in part of combat the cruise missile; aboard ships now being built in Soviet shipyards and completion of a new plant apparently planned to expand production of the Soviet Backfire bomber.

The Backfire, which can reach the United States at high altitudes, is excluded from limitations in the SALT II treaty now being negotiated.

The cruise missile is a small, pilotless jet plane that can carry a nuclear warhead to a target with pinpoint accuracy by following a computerized "map" of the terrain over which it flies.

Soviet tests of Mig25 Foxbat jets—high-altitude interceptors—against drones have been conducted recently, sources said, including some shortly before Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko early this month dropped a demand that cruise missiles launched from planes be limited to a 1,500-mile range.

The sources contended, however, that U.S. intelligence analysts are not agreed that Soviet radar capability was good enough in the last test to shoot down a missile flying below 200 feet, as reported by Aviation Week and Space Technology magazine. The altitude is the same at which cruise missiles operate.